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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

ARMY and DIA review(s) completed.

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109

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25X1

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Information as of 1600

8 March 1967

25X1

HIGHLIGHTS

The Revolutionary Dai Viet party is reportedly assessing the strength of its candidate for the upcoming presidential election in South Vietnam.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
Viet Cong guerrillas attack the US Army base at Dong Tam in the Mekong Delta (Para. 1). A recent NVA captive claims that an artillery regiment subordinate to the 324 "B" Division may be located near the DMZ (Paras. 2-4). [redacted] reveals some enemy plans and tactics in II Corps (Paras. 5-7). Weekly Review of South Vietnam battle statistics (Para. 8).

25X1

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:
The Constituent Assembly completed the chapter of the constitution dealing with "special institutions" on 6 March (Para. 1). Ha Thuc Ky and his Revolutionary Dai Viet party are firming up their campaign plans for the presidential election (Paras. 2-4).

III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:
There is nothing of significance to report.

IV. Other Communist Military Developments:
There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: A compilation of information obtained from more than 100 individuals from southern North Vietnam shows popular disenchantment with DRV policies (Paras. 1-4).

ANNEX I

The Interim Status of Operation JUNCTION CITY

The massive allied sweep of the Communists' War Zone "C," underway for two weeks, has caused

significant damage to the enemy although it appears unlikely that any large-scale engagements will occur. Seven hundred pounds of enemy documents have been captured.

ANNEX II:

South Vietnam Battle Statistics
1963 to week of 26 Feb - 4 Mar 1967
- Weapons and Personnel Losses
- Viet Cong Attacks and Incidents

8 March 1967



I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Viet Cong guerrillas attacked the US Army installation in the Mekong Delta province of Dinh Tuong during the early morning hours of 8 March with a heavy 15-minute mortar and recoilless rifle barrage. At least two Americans were killed and another 23 wounded, according to preliminary reports. This is the first shelling of the Dong Tam camp since elements of the US 9th Infantry Division moved into it late in January.. The base, the first large American installation in the Mekong Delta, was built on ground dredged from the Mekong River and is surrounded by paddy land which is largely controlled at night by Viet Cong guerrillas.

NVA Artillery Regiment Possibly Near DMZ

2. During a preliminary interrogation, a North Vietnamese Army (NVA) private captured near the DMZ on 1 March claimed that there were plans for an assault, probably by elements of the 812th Regiment/324 "B" NVA Division, against US Marine/ARVN positions at Dong Ha, in northernmost Quang Tri Province, "some-time during March."

3. According to the captive, a "mobile artillery unit" of regimental-size, subordinate to the 324 "B" Division and "equipped with six two-wheeled 175-mm. guns, six 105-mm. guns, and five 120-mm. mortars," would provide fire support to attacking infantry elements of the 812th Regiment in their assault on Dong Ha.

4. The current MACV order of battle does not carry an artillery regiment subordinate to the 324 "B" Division, although it is possible that an artillery unit of lesser size does exist. The report of long-range 175-mm. weapons is highly doubtful, and probably represents recoilless guns which have been incorrectly identified. The recent spate of heavy mortar attacks against US 175-mm. artillery positions just south of the DMZ, however, lends credence to the possible presence of a major NVA artillery unit in this area.

8 March 1967

25X1

Communist Strategy in II Corps

5. Recent interrogation [redacted]

25X1

has provided insights into Communist strategy and tactics in the central highlands and coastal lowlands of South Vietnam's II Corps. The captive stated that [redacted] was under strict orders not to mass more than two battalions at any one time because of their vulnerability to US firepower. He emphasized the critical importance of Kontum Province to the Viet Cong, largely because of the extensive natural cover it afforded, and added that infiltration routes passing through Kontum to both Binh Dinh and Quang Ngai provinces were supposed to be kept open at all costs.

6. According to the captive, NVA/Viet Cong forces plan to establish a strategic operational base near the allied Special Forces camp at Ba To in south-central Quang Ngai Province. Because of this, the captive does not believe that there is any plan to draw elements of the US 1st Air Cavalry Division from their present area of operations in northeast Binh Dinh Province to southern Quang Ngai. [redacted]

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7. The captive believed it entirely logical for [redacted] to remain in Cambodia in the vicinity of southwestern Kontum Province "because of the neutrality situation in Cambodia" and because these forces were less conspicuous in that area than in their former Chu Pong Mountain redoubt near southwestern Pleiku Province. He further stated that the NVA had no intention of overrunning and holding a major city such as Pleiku or Kontum city, since it was beyond its capability to do so.

8 March 1967

25X1

Weekly Review of South Vietnam Battle Statistics

8. The week of 26 February - 4 March
compared with the week of 19-25 February:

I. Viet Cong Incidents

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Attacks</u>	<u>Regimental size</u>	<u>Battalion size</u>
19-25 Feb	15	0	1
26 Feb - 4 Mar	36	0	NA

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Company size</u>	<u>Harassment</u>	<u>Terrorism</u>
19-25 Feb	NA	259	27
26 Feb - 4 Mar	2	404	25

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Sabotage</u>	<u>Propaganda</u>	<u>Anti-Aircraft</u>
19-25 Feb	6	8	461
26 Feb - 4 Mar	4	21	311

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Total Incidents</u>	
19-25 Feb	776	
26 Feb - 4 Mar	801	8 March 1967

II. Casualties

	<u>VC/NVA</u>		<u>GVN</u>	
	<u>19-25 Feb</u>	<u>26 Feb-4 Mar</u>	<u>19-25 Feb</u>	<u>26 Feb-4 Mar</u>
Killed	2,332	1,736	286	199
Wounded	-----	-----	765	505
Missing/ Captured	<u> *</u>	<u> *</u>	<u> 45</u>	<u> 18</u>
TOTALS	2,332	1,736	1,096	722

	<u>US</u>		<u>FREE WORLD</u>	
	<u>19-25 Feb</u>	<u>26 Feb-4 Mar</u>	<u>19-25 Feb</u>	<u>26 Feb-4 Mar</u>
Killed	160	231	21	6
Wounded	918	1,377	60	25
Missing/ Captured	<u> 0</u>	<u> 0</u>	<u> 0</u>	<u> 0</u>
TOTALS	1,078	1,608	81	31

III. Weapons Captured

	<u>VC/NVA</u>		<u>GVN</u>	
	<u>19-25 Feb</u>	<u>26 Feb-4 Mar</u>	<u>19-25 Feb</u>	<u>26 Feb-4 Mar</u>
Individual	942	Not	168	103
Crew-Served	<u> 72</u>	<u>Reported</u>	<u> 3</u>	<u> 1</u>
TOTALS	1,014		171	104

*Field reporting of enemy captured figures is now based on a monthly count of POWs held in POW camps. Figures for enemy captured will thus be incorporated in the monthly "Personnel Losses" chart which appears in the Situation in South Vietnam.

8 March 1967

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The sixth chapter of the constitution, dealing with "special institutions" or councils, was completed by the Constituent Assembly on 6 March. Provision was made for three more groups to advise the future government: a culture and education council; an economic and social council; and an ethnic council. The memberships of all three will be determined in the same fashion: one third of the members will be designated by the president and the remainder will be elected by groups and organizations which have a vested interest in the particular council. The basic function of the councils will be to contribute ideas to the legislature before it draws up laws, programs, and plans affecting the councils' areas of concern, probably in the same manner that the Peoples-Army Council (PAC) now operates.

Ha Thuc Ky's Plans for Presidential Campaign

2. The Revolutionary Dai Viet party, which plans to run Ha Thuc Ky as its presidential nominee, has been assessing the strength of its competition and claims to be lining up its own bases of support in preparation for the coming elections.

they expect a military- or government-backed candidate to be vulnerable during the campaign on several accounts. These vulnerabilities, on which the Dai Viets hope to capitalize, include the rising cost of living, corruption, military favoritism, administrative inefficiency, and a shortage of well-organized political cadres. On the other hand, Ha Thuc Ky reportedly has admitted that Premier Ky is probably the strongest potential candidate because he is now in power, has influence and the necessary finances, and controls the security services.

3. The Revolutionary Dai Viets are convinced that Ha Thuc Ky's vice-presidential running mate should be a southerner and a non - Dai Viet, preferably a Buddhist. Ha Thuc Ky's choices so far have

8 March 1967

II-1

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been narrowed down to three men, all southerners: Mai Tho Truyen, a southern lay Buddhist leader; Tran Huu Phuong, a former governor of the National Bank under the Diem regime; and Au Truong Thanh, the economy minister who resigned last fall in protest over alleged northern domination of the government. None of the three has been personally contacted yet by Ha Thuc Ky.

4. The Revolutionary Dai Viets--whose source of strength is in the northernmost provinces--continue to indicate that they may soon declare themselves openly as a political party, depending on the date of promulgation of the constitution. The party has traditionally operated underground, without recognized legal status. It remains doubtful that Ha Thuc Ky, even as the candidate of an open party and despite the current high level of party activity on the part of his supporters, would be a major threat to the military-backed candidate or to a more prominent civilian, such as Tran Van Huong or Phan Khac Suu, should either decide to run.

8 March 1967

II-2

Approved For Release 2004/07/08 : CIA-RDP79T00826A001700010033-1

III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

8 March 1967

III-IV - 1

V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. A compilation of information obtained from the interrogation of more than 100 individuals who were residing in the southern coastal region of North Vietnam during January and February 1967--most of whom were poorly educated--has revealed their common fear of US bombings and their desire to have the air strikes stopped despite the military or political consequences.

2. Some of those questioned thought that if the DRV government stopped its support of the war in the South, the bombings would cease. Additionally, they revealed a growing skepticism about the regime's claim that US bombings were in retaliation for "terrible losses" inflicted on US forces in the South. The same individuals gave no credence at all to official North Vietnamese reports of the shooting down of many US aircraft because they had witnessed few if any effective air defense measures. Because of these doubts, and because the regime has been unable to end the air attacks, many of the persons questioned have begun to doubt Hanoi's boast of eventual victory. Many have also judged the decision to continue fighting in the South as a lack of official concern for the dangers and hardships the bombings have caused the people.

3. Other individuals have also decried the economic disruptions caused by the bombings, especially to the coastal fishing enterprises. They complained that the regime has confiscated fishing boats for use in coastal shipping--presumably to supplement overland transportation--and stated that the bombings had limited the number of actual fishing hours so that the fishermen cannot catch enough fish to exchange for their rice ration. The same persons were resentful about having to participate in bomb damage repair work without compensation, and frequently mentioned the cowardly action of the local anti-aircraft militia who have replaced the regular military units in their villages.

8 March 1967

V-1

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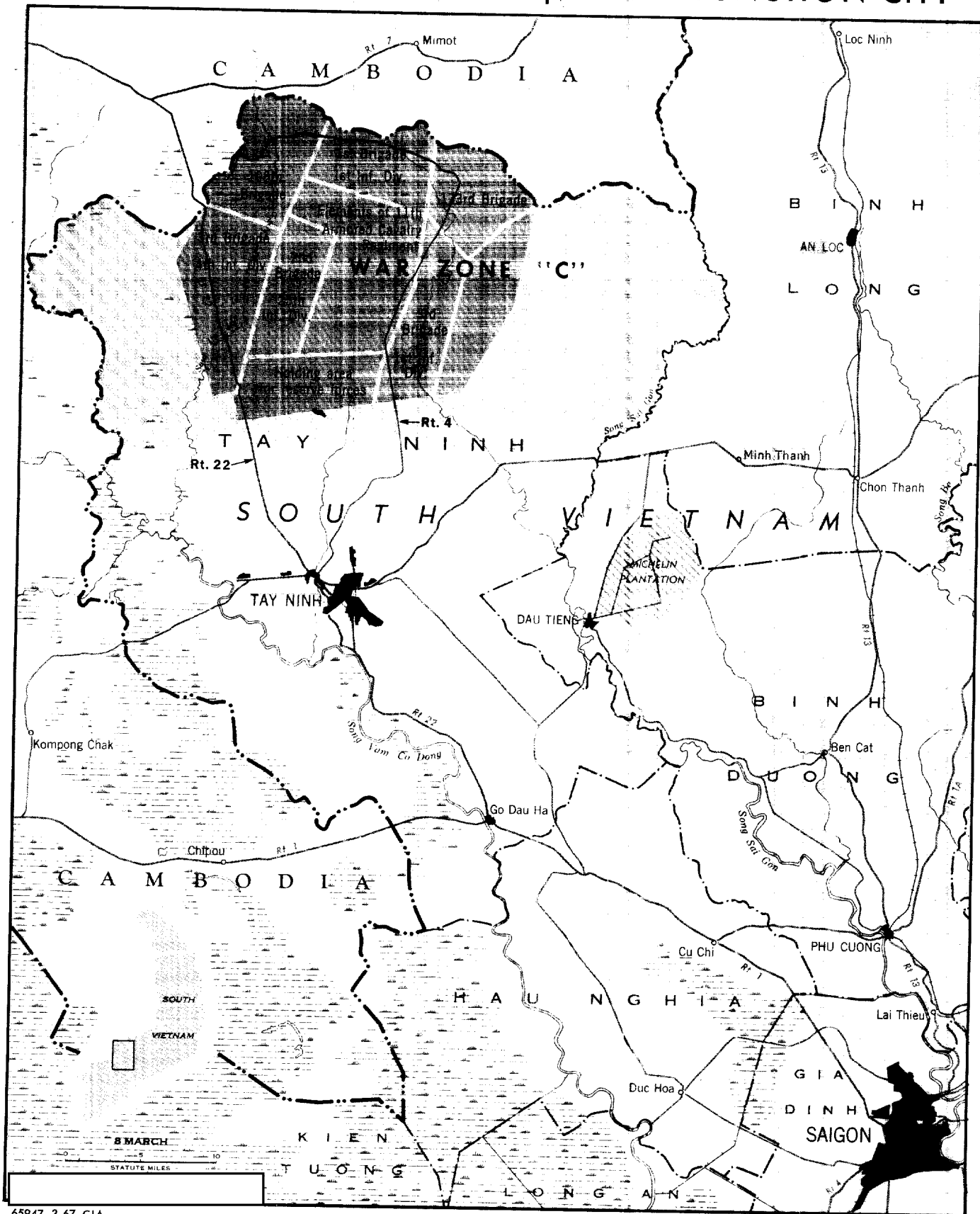
4. Finally, many of the individuals, when specifically questioned about the accuracy of the bombing attacks, admitted that the bombings were selective and appeared to be directed against such targets as bridges, radar installations, coastal and inland waterway traffic, and security posts.

8 March 1967

V-2

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Deployment of US Forces in Operation JUNCTION CITY



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ANNEX I

THE INTERIM STATUS OF OPERATION JUNCTION CITY

1. The massive allied sweep operation in the Communists' War Zone "C" stronghold has now been under way for approximately two weeks. The operational area was believed to contain base camps and installations of the 9th Viet Cong Division. The 70th Viet Cong regiment and various components of the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN).

2. Physical damage to the enemy both in the destruction of installations and troops has been significant, but not spectacular. Although the determined search operations still under way may eventually uncover main enemy headquarters installations or major supply caches, it appears unlikely that any large-scale engagements between allied and enemy units in the area will occur.

3. As of 8 March, the allies had killed 445 of the enemy and captured some 155 weapons. Among other items captured, as of 4 March, were 49 tons of rice and a significant amount of radio equipment. Allied forces have also destroyed a large number of enemy structures and defensive bunkers and 86 tons of rice. Although the amount of rice taken or destroyed in the operation is substantial, it probably does not represent a really serious blow to the enemy in this area, which is close to major rice producing regions. One captured enemy officer claims that the Communists can replace their rice stores in short order in the III Corps area. Possibly for the long run the most significant material taken by the allies may be the several hundred pounds of captured enemy documents. The documents taken in Operation CEDAR FALLS, which recently ranged though the Iron Triangle on the edge of the Communists' War Zone "D," are proving upon examination to be some of the most fruitful of the war.

A-1

8 March 1967

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4. The over-all military concept of JUNCTION CITY involved the formation of a blocking arc along the Cambodian border edge of the operational area. This barrier was designed to cut off the retreat of some enemy units. Staging from airstrips at Tay Ninh, Minh Thanh, and An Loc, US troops were paradropped and helilifted into blocking positions, and roads, bridges, and other known exit routes were sealed off. A US force composed in part of armored cavalry units then swept up from the south hoping to hammer the Communists against the blocking arc.

5. The Communists, however, perceived the allied plan. Operation ATTLEBORO in October penetrated the southern fringe of War Zone "C" and smaller subsequent operations mounted around its edges, partly in an effort to keep the enemy troops off balance, kept the Communists alert to allied maneuvers. Moreover, the allies served notice that major Communist base areas were high on their target list when they destroyed the Iron Triangle in Binh Duong in January.

6. The Communists apparently were able to get a good idea of the exact timing of JUNCTION CITY because of the step-up in B-52 raids which preceded it, of the prepositioning of allied supplies around the operational area, and of the general increased activity in allied base camps which necessarily precedes the large-scale deployment of allied forces.

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7. It is hard to envision how the inauguration of such a large operation as JUNCTION CITY could be concealed from the Communists, given the level of preparation which must be undertaken. Certainly in the case of sweeps against major enemy bases, operations like JUNCTION CITY would seem well worth the effort even if the major enemy forces in the area elude the allies. Psychologically, such operations appear to have a very deleterious impact on the enemy. There are numerous captured documents which tell of the demoralization that affects local enemy units following a large and destructive allied sweep operation.

25X1

8. It is also clear that such operations, especially when accompanied by careful and extensive search operations, significantly disrupt Communist military, civil, and economic activities. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Earlier allied operations in this area have caused a marked rise in the refugee outflow, thus narrowing the population base upon which the Communists must depend.

9. It seems reasonable to speculate, nevertheless, that the restricted physical damage so far done to the Communists by JUNCTION CITY may actually reflect the beginning of a shift in one element of the Communist tactics in South Vietnam. Perhaps, in the wake of the allied sweeps mounted directly against major enemy headquarters areas in III Corps during the last few months, the Communist high command has decided to reduce even further their usually spartan headquarters apparatus and fixed installations, making them as mobile as possible. The defense of such bases as War Zone "C" could thus become less important to the Communists, while reinstallation of the necessary headquarters would be easier for them following the termination of the allied sweep.

10. There are some indications that the enemy has begun to prepare more secure and extensive redoubts in the mountainous highland area of central and northern South Vietnam, possibly partly in the belief that allied ground and air penetration of these bases would be more difficult. The recent buildup in the A Chau Valley of Thua Thien Province is a case in point [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The enemy also seems to be preparing more extensive base areas in southern Laos close to South Vietnam, no doubt believing them less vulnerable to allied interdiction. Such bases could also serve as a secure area for postwar operations should the Communists opt for some type of political settlement of the war in South Vietnam.

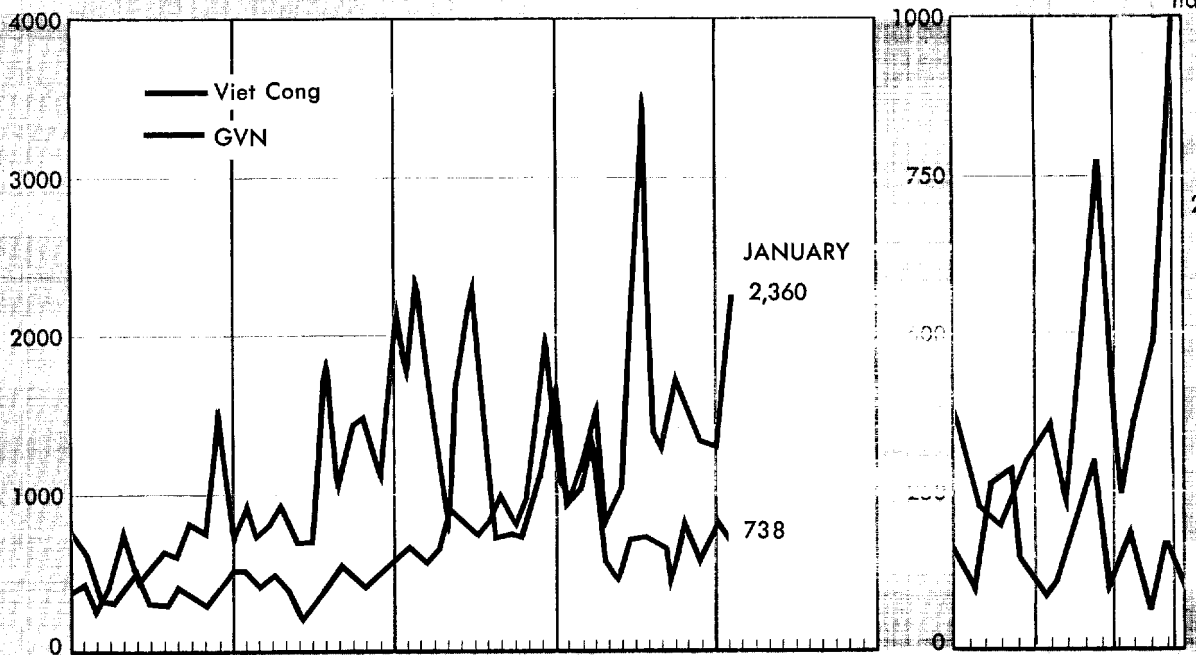
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8 March 1967

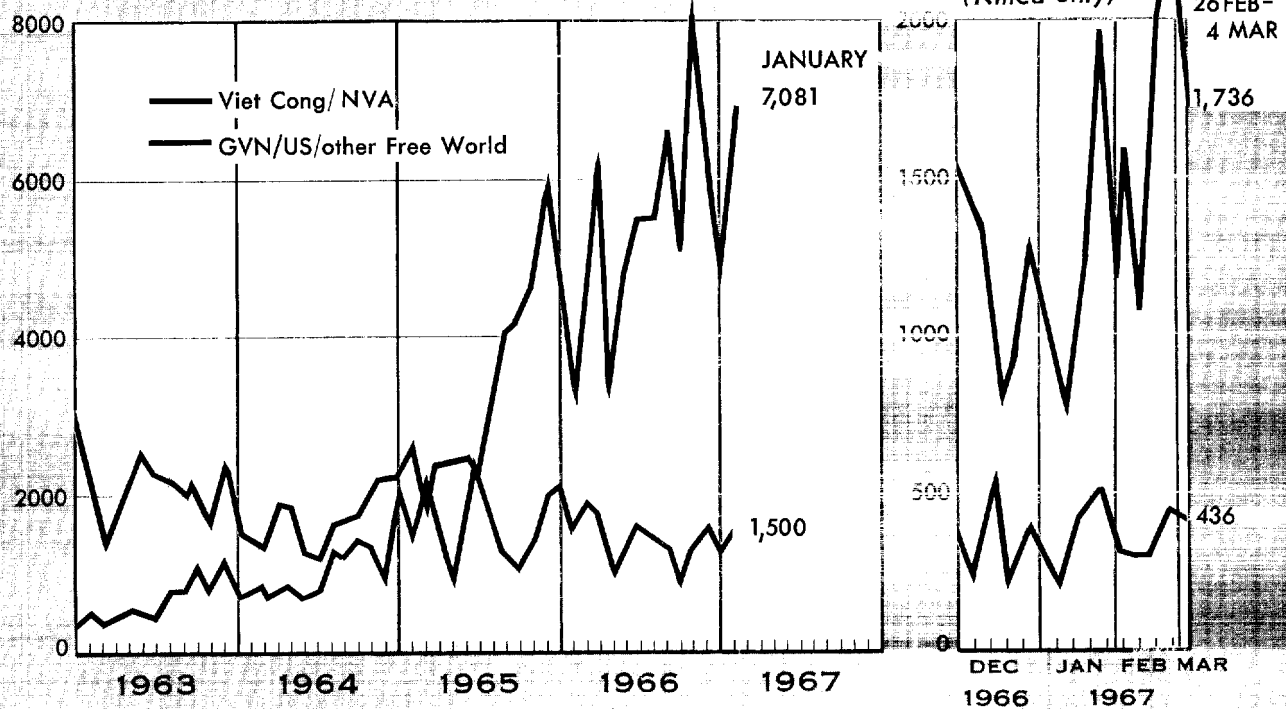
A-3

25X1

Weapons Losses



Personnel Losses (Excluding Wounded)

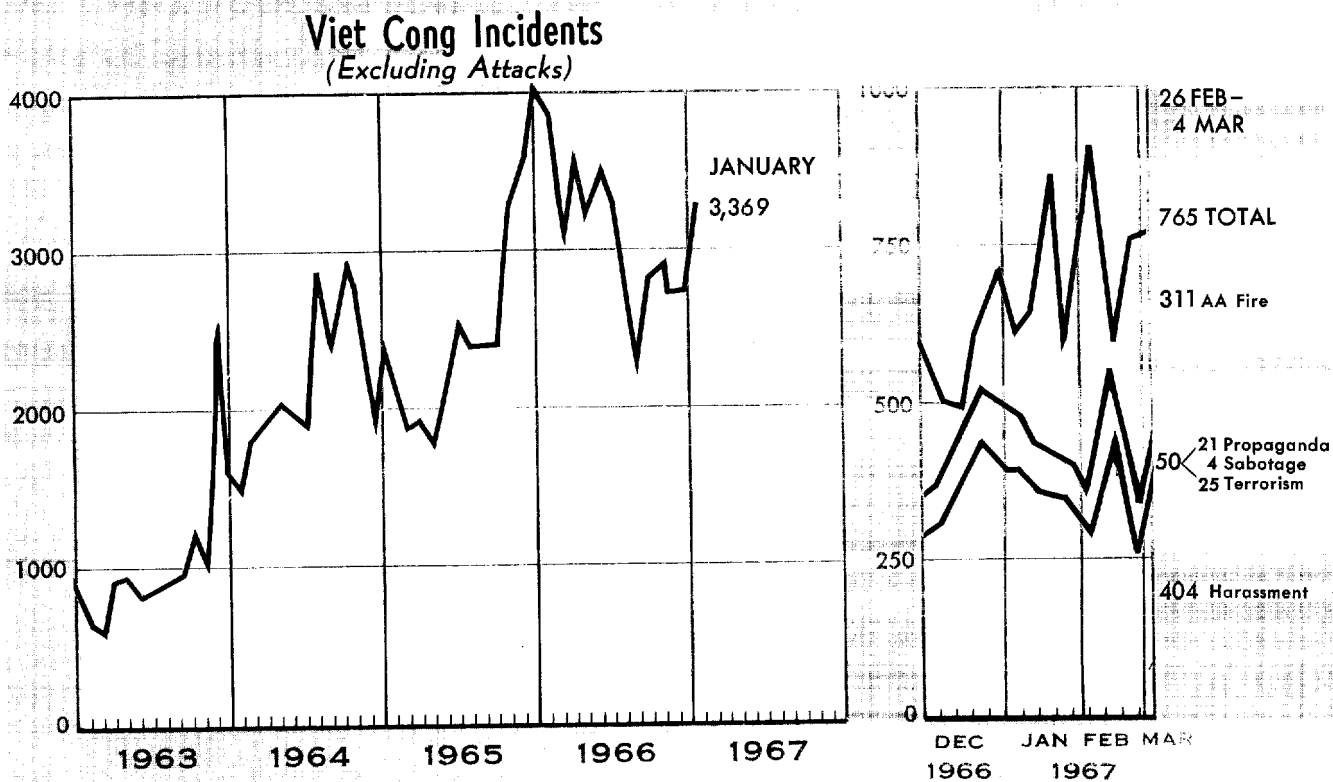
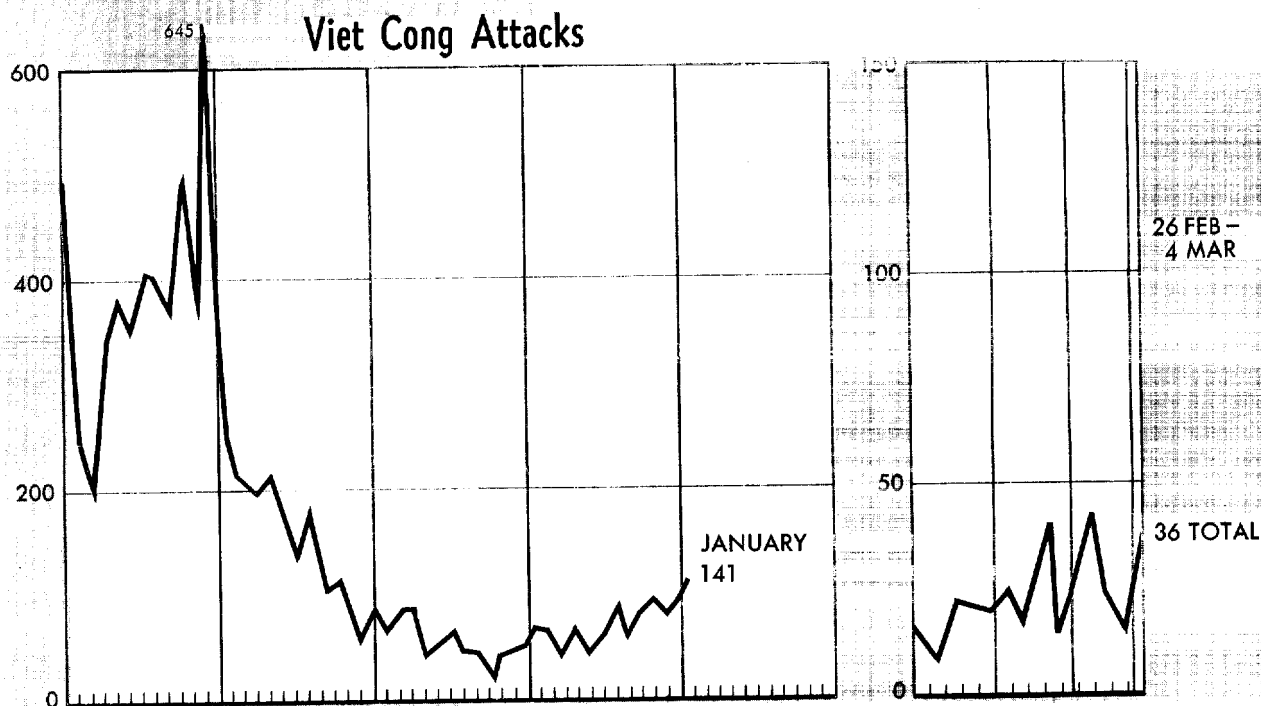


US Casualties to Date: Killed 7,492 Wounded 43,246 Captured 142 Missing 368

65928 3-67 CIA

*Due to a change in the reporting of personnel losses, beginning 12 February, the weekly figure will represent only personnel killed. The adjacent monthly chart will continue to reflect killed, missing and captured.

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25X1

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